

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

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The ‘Aqīdah of Imām Ash‘arī and Imām Māturīdī – The ‘Aqīdah of Ahl as-Sunnah

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Introductory Comments

- During the era of Nabi ﷺ, the *khilafah* of Abu Bakr (2 years), and the *khilafah* of Umar (10 years) there was little need for a codified theology. People's minds were pure at that time and unadulterated by any foreign influences. For most people, قال الله and قال الرسول were sufficient.

If any unorthodox ideas did arise, there were giants of knowledge such as Abu Bakr, Umar, Abdullah bin Masud (may Allah be pleased with them all), and others who were there to clarify any confusion. These early Muslims, who spoke and understood Arabic, would affirm what was in the Qur'an without delving into intricate theological debates.
- Within a short period of time however, Islam reached the Byzantine empire (الروم), Egypt, and Iraq. These nations had their own concepts of God and divinity. With the annexation of these nations into the Islamic *khilafah*, Muslims were first exposed to ideologies from these conquered nations, such as ancient Greek philosophy.
- For the early Muslims traditionists, قال الله and قال الرسول were sufficient. However, for people born in lands far removed from the epicenter of Islam, who had grown up exposed to philosophy and understandings foreign to Islam, this approach was not sufficient.
- New development – with the ever-increasing influence of these foreign ideologies, the Mu'tazilite (rationalist) sect soon developed. They wholeheartedly adopted logic and philosophy and attempted to use it to enhance their understanding of *shar'i nusūs*. However, in doing this, they fell prey to positing *'aql* and logic as the basis of accepting or rejecting any belief, to the extent that they begin to reject authentic prophetic text if it contravened the dictates of *'aql*.
- The scholars of Ahl as-Sunnah, who were known traditionalists, had to then contend with this rationalist/Mu'tazili problem. *I'tizāl* eventually gained such prominence that it was

adopted as the official state doctrine in the early Abbasid era. Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal rose to defend the ‘aqīdah of Ahl as-Sunnah. As a result, he suffered severely at their hands.

- Another prominent figure who later defended the ‘aqīdah of Ahl as-Sunnah was Imam Ali ibn Ismail Abu’l Hasan al-Ash‘ari (260 – 324). Imam al-Ash‘ari himself began as a Mu‘tazili. The scion of a legacy Mu‘tazili scholarship, he was reared as the protégé of the prominent Mu‘tazili scholar Abu ‘Ali al-Jubbā‘ī. He grew up in a strong intellectual environment, heavily focused on logical analysis and argumentation. He was never fully convinced of Mu‘tazili doctrine and frequently engaged and debated with his teachers, often silencing them. At the age of forty, he went to the seclusion, giving himself time to ponder and turn to Allah. He emerged some days later, announcing that he had officially renounced Mu‘tazili ‘aqīdah, and would now defend the mainstream ‘aqīdah of Ahl as-Sunnah against heretical influences and doctrines.
- In *Tabyīn Kidhb al-Muftari* (تبيين كذب المفتري), Ibn ‘Asakir (d. 571) states that Imam al-Ash‘ari had dreams of Rasūlullāh ﷺ wherein he was guided to use the tools of argument that he possessed to defend the traditional, mainstream creed of Islam. He passionately took up this task and was met with support and accolades from ‘Ulama of Ahl as-Sunnah all over. His unique approach of utilizing rational argumentation to explain the Quran and hadith and defend mainstream ‘aqīdah of Ahl as-Sunnah became known as *kalam*.
- Scholars do not view *kalam* as being obligatory in itself, but necessary due to certain legal principles. One legal maxim states: —ما لا يتم الواجب إلا به فهو واجب— *Whatever the obligatory cannot be achieved without is itself obligatory*. It was necessary for scholars to take up *kalam* to engage Mu‘tazilis on their own terms in order to defend the ‘aqīdah of Ahl as-Sunnah.

- At the same time, Imam Abu Mansur al-Maturidi (d. 333) took up the same task. Though their eras were the same and their efforts were similar, Imam al-Maturidi was geographically separated from Imam al-Ash'ari, hailing from Maturid, a place near Samarqand, in present-day Uzbekistan. He based his explanation of 'aqidah on works of Imam Abu Hanifah and others, such as *al-Fiqh al-Akbar*, *al-Fiqh al-Absat*, and *al-Kitab al-Wasiyyah*.
- Though the two imams never met, their students eventually did. When they met and discussed these issues, they discovered that these were 'two sides of the same sword'.
- About 11/12 semantic (لفظي) differences exist between the two imams. However, these issues are so minute that their teachings essentially boil down to the same thing. It is اختلاف التسميات مع اتفاق المعاني
- For further reference, Shaykh Sa'id Fudah has a work on these masa'il called المسائل الاختلافية بين الأشاعرة والماتريدية. It is an explanation of a much shorter *risalah* by Ibn Kamal Basha. Imam Subki has also explained this masa'il.

Additional points:

The formal science of *Kalam*, in addition to considering *shar'i nusus*, consists of much rational argumentation. Some detractors have used this as a basis to denounce the science of *Kalam*, saying that the focus of *Mutakallimin* has diverged from the Quran and Sunnah and they instead suffice with mere rational argumentation and philosophy. Though this claim is not entirely true, these detractors should note that utilizing rational argumentation is not unfounded, as it has a precedent and a basis in the Quran. In Surah al-Anbiya, Allah ﷻ uses a compelling rational argument known as

Burhān al-Tamānu‘ to establish *tawhid*. Allah ﷻ says, ﴿لَوْ كَانَ فِيهِمَا آلِهَةٌ إِلَّا اللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَا﴾. Similarly, in Surah al-Mu’minun, Allah ﷻ says,

﴿مَا اتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ مِنْ وَلَدٍ وَمَا كَانَ مَعَهُ مِنْ إِلَهٍ إِذَا لَذَّهَبَ كُلُّ إِلَهٍ بِمَا خَلَقَ وَلَعَا بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُصِفُونَ﴾.

Through these verses, Allah ﷻ explains that had there (hypothetically) been two gods, the Universe would not have functioned properly and *fasad* would have ensued. This is due to the fact that if the two gods simultaneously willed opposing outcomes regarding one particular matter, either both outcomes would occur – a logical fallacy, or only one’s god will would come to pass, rendering the other god incapable of effecting his will. For example, if god 1 willed for a person to be born and god 2 willed for the person not be born, then either:

- a) Both outcomes occur – the person is simultaneously born and not born. This is a logical fallacy and is not possible.
- b) The person is born. In this case, the will of god 1 dominates the will of god 2. This shows that god 2 is incapable of fully implementing his will. Since incapability negates divinity, god 2 is in fact not a god.
- c) The person is not born. This is the exact opposite of case (2) above. This scenario results in negating the divinity of god 1.

This ayah demonstrates that it is not logically possible for two gods to coexist. Therefore, rationally, there can only be one god. Someone might point out that in this example, we presupposed that both gods disagree. What if they agreed? In response to this, even if we were to hypothetically assume that both gods always agree, we must ask if it is *possible* at all for god 2 to disagree. If god 2 is not

capable of disagreeing, there are limitations on his capability and he therefore cannot be a god. If it is possible for god 2 to disagree, then the same process described above would result.

Through this compelling argument, Allah ﷻ succinctly demonstrates that it is not possible for two gods to coexist. This case forms the rational basis for tawhid. *Mutakallimun* (scholars of aqidah/kalam) derive textual proof for their focus on logical argumentation from verses such as these.

A brief background to the development and emergence of the Ash‘ari and Maturidi schools of ‘aqīdah

As with other branches of ‘ilm, such as fiqh, hadith, tajwid, etc, the science of ‘aqīdah was not formally codified during the era of Nabi ﷺ, the sahabah, and the early Muslims. They had little need for such codified theology. Most of the time, Surah Ikhlas would suffice. Deviant, unorthodox beliefs first began to take root during the *khilafah* of Uthman (may Allah be pleased with him). During the early ‘Abbasid era, with the introduction of Hellenistic philosophy in Muslim lands, mu‘tazili beliefs gained wide audience and even gained favour within the ruling class. Early ‘Abbasid caliphs such as Ma‘mun al-Rashid and Mu‘tasim billah declared *I‘tizāl* to be the official state doctrine. Using their political position, they forced conformity to their beliefs. Scholars such as Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal and later Imam Abu al-Hasan al-Ash‘ari and Imam Abu Mansur al-Maturidi rose to defend orthodox Islamic belief and advocate the approach and creedal position of the *salaf*. Students and followers of these scholars later began to attribute themselves to them, giving rise to the terms “*Ash‘ari*” and “*Maturidi*”.

It should be noted that the Ash'ari and Maturidi schools are essentially two approaches to the same theology. The few, minor differences that do exist are mostly semantic (لفظي) and not significant. The two groups have always been mutually tolerant and have never labeled one another as heretical or misguided¹. The differences have never incited either of the groups to the تكفير، of the other. Imam Subki says:

قال التاج السبكي: ثم تصفحت كتب الحنفية فوجدت جميع المسائل التي بيننا وبينهم خلاف فيها ثلاث عشرة مسألة، منها معنوي ستة مسائل والباقي لفظي وتلك الست المعنوية لا تقتضي مخالفتهم لنا ولا مخالفتنا لهم منها تكفيرا ولا تبديعا، صرح بذلك الأستاذ أبو منصور البغدادي وغيره من أئمتنا وأئمتهم وهو غني عن التصريح لوضوحه، ومن كلام الحافظ الذهبي: الأصحاب كلهم مع اختلافهم في بعض المسائل كلهم أجمعون على ترك تكفير بعضهم بعضا مجمعون بخلاف من عداهم من سائر الطوائف وجميع الفرق فإنهم حين اختلف بهم مستشنعات الأهواء والطرق كثر بعضهم بعضا ورأى تبريه ممن خالفه فرضا

إتحاف السادة المتقين للزبيدي (ج 2: ص 8)

قال الكستلي: وبين الطائفتين اختلاف في بعض الأصول كمسألة التكوين ومسألة الإشتناء في الإيمان ومسألة إيمان المقلد والمحققين من الفريقين لا ينسب أحدهما الآخر إلى البدعة والضلالة

إتحاف السادة المتقين للزبيدي (ج 2: ص 6)

Before moving on, it would be appropriate to briefly acquaint ourselves with both imams.

¹ Mangera, *al-Fiqh al-Akbar Explained*, p. 14

A brief life sketch of Imam Abu al-Hasan al-Ash'ari and Imam Abu Mansur al-Maturidi

Imam Abu al-Hasan al-Ash'ari

Imam Ash'ari, whose full name was Ali bin Isma'il bin Abi Bishr Ishaq bin Salim bin Isma'il bin Abdillah bin Musa bin Bilal bin Abi Burdah bin Abi Musa al-Ash'ari, was a descendent of the famous companion Abu Musa al-Ash'ari. He was born in Basra in the year 260 AH and passed away in 324 AH. He started off as a Mu'tazili, being tutored by his step-father, the prominent Mu'tazili scholar Abu Ali al-Jubba'i. He became proficient in their theology and methods of argumentation. He was also a skilled debater. At the age of forty, he shocked all by publicly renouncing Mu'tazili theology and converting to orthodoxy. Thereafter, he committed himself to promoting and defending the beliefs of Ahl as-Sunnah wa'l Jama'ah². Although both Shafi'i and Maliki scholars claim him to be from their ranks, the more correct opinion was that Imam Ash'ari was a Shafi'i.

His teachers:

- Zakariyya al-Saji
- Abu Khalifah al-Jumahi
- Sahl bin Sarh
- Muhammad bin Ya'qub al-Murqi'
- Abd ar-Rahman bin Khalaf al-Dabbi (الضبي)

His students:

- Muhammad bin Ahmad al-Ta'i (الطائي)
- Abu al-Hasan al-Bahili
- Bundar bin al-Hasan al-Suhi (الصوحي)
- Ali bin Muhammad bin Mahdi

His students' students:

- Ibn al-Furak
- Imam al-Haramayn Abd al-Malik al-Juwayni

² Mangera, *al-Fiqh al-Akbar Explained*, p. 16

- Abu Bakr al-Baqillani
- Abu Ishaq al-Isfara'ini (الإسفرائيني)

Imam Abu Mansur al-Maturidi

Abu Mansur al-Maturidi, also known as Muhammad bin Muhammad bin Mahmud, was born in Maturid, a district of Samarqand, in present day Uzbekistan.³ He passed away in 333 AH. He was a prominent jurist of the Hanafi school, having studied under Nusayr bin Yahya al-Balkhi. Although Imam Ash'ari was based in Basra, the birthplace and center of the Mu'tazali movement, the echoes of *I'tizal* had reached Transoxania, where Imam al-Maturidi was based. It was Imam al-Maturidi who stood up to combat these deviant beliefs and defend the beliefs of *Ahl al-Sunnah*.

His writings

- Kitab al-Tawhid
- Ta'wilat al-Qur'an

His teachers:

- Abu Nasr al-'Iyadi
- Abu Bakr al-Jawzajani
- Nasir bin Yahya al-Bakhi
- Muhammad bin Muqatil al-Razi

What does it mean to be attributed to Imam Abu al-Hasan al-Ash'ari or Imam Abu Mansur al-Maturidi in 'aqidah?

A person's aqidah comprises his fundamental beliefs of din. It therefore may seem unnatural to ascribe our aqidah to another. After all, aren't we independently required to believe in all the tenets

³ Mangera, *al-Fiqh al-Akbar Explained*, p. 17

of faith ourselves? It may seem even more unnatural to ascribe our belief to someone who only came three centuries after Nabi ﷺ, like Imam Abu'l Hasan al-Ash'ari (d. 324) or Imam Abu Mansur al-Maturidi (d. 333)

- In actuality though, there is nothing strange or unnatural about this. Imam Abu'l Hasan al-Ash'ari and others did not arrive on the scene suddenly introducing new beliefs. Rather, they simply expounded the beliefs that were already held by Nabi ﷺ and the Sahabah.
- Thus, attributing ourselves to Imam Abu'l Hasan al-Ash'ari or Imam Abu Mansur Maturidi is nothing more than ascribing ourselves to the belief of Nabi ﷺ and the Sahabah, as explained by either of these two imams. This is exactly the same as attributing ourselves to Imam Abu Hanifah or Imam Shafi in fiqh, or Imam Asim or Imam Kisa'i in qira'at. Imam Asim did not introduce any new mode of recitation. He simply preserved and transmitted to us a recitation that existed at the time of Nabi ﷺ, that Nabi ﷺ and some sahabah recited in. Many of us recite in that same mode of recitation today. We call it the recitation of Imam Asim due to the fact that he was the one who transmitted it and delivered it to us today, not because he invented it.

- Similarly, Imam Abu Hanifah, Imam Shafi'i, and others did not introduce any new system of practice. Rather, their rulings are derived from ayat of the Quran and ahadith of Nabi ﷺ. In ascribing ourselves to any one of these madhabs, we are not at all distancing ourselves from the practice of Nabi ﷺ. Instead, we are latching on to the practice of Nabi ﷺ, as elucidated by these Imams. Therefore, just as misleading and inherently mistaken as the question, "do you follow Nabi ﷺ or Imam Abu Hanifah?" is the question "are you adopting the beliefs of Nabi ﷺ or the beliefs of Imam Ash'ari?"

- Shaykh Sa'id Hawa says⁴:

وقال الشيخ سعيد - رحمه الله تعالى - أيضا (المصدر السابق ص ٨):
 (وكما وجد في الفقه مؤلفون وكتب، وكما وجد في الفقه أئمة
 أجمعت الأمة على قبولهم، فكذلك في باب العقائد وجد أئمة
 أجمعت الأمة على إمامتهم في هذا الشأن كأبي الحسن الأشعري وأبي
 منصور الماتريدي) اهـ.

"Just as there are authors, books, and imams in fiqh that the entire Muslim ummah has unanimously accepted and embraced, similarly there are imams in 'aqidah, the scholarship of whom the ummah has embraced. These are the likes of Imam Abu'l Hasan al-Ash'ari and Abu Mansur al-Maturidi."

⁴ Hawa, *Jawalat fi'l Fiqhayn*, p. 8

What does the term *Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l Jama'ah* refer to?

- The term '*Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l Jama'ah*' is loosely derived from the hadith in which the Prophet ﷺ described that his ummah will eventually split into 73 sects. The one sect that will be saved will be "ما أنا عليه وأصحابي" – the group that sticks to the precedent laid out by the Prophet ﷺ, hence the term '*sunnah*' in '*Ahl al-Sunnah*'. In another hadith, the Prophet ﷺ urged followers to stick to the *السواد الأعظم*, or the majority of Muslims, hence the term '*jama'ah*'.
- Keen observers might find it puzzling that the term "*Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l Jama'ah*" does not seem to appear in the terminology (*istilahat*) of the earlier scholars, nor did the Prophet ﷺ or the Sahabah explicitly classify themselves with the name.
- This is easily resolved by realizing that the term "*Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l Jama'ah*" emerged as a designation to refer to those people who preserved and upheld the beliefs espoused by Nabi ﷺ and the Sahabah. Initially, there was no need for any term to refer to these people. They were the *أصل*; broadly falling under the ambit of *ما أنا عليه وأصحابي*. However, as time passed, heretical groups beginning splintering off this mainstream majority of Muslims. These groups came to be identified with various names that highlighted their departure from the mainstream and the deviant beliefs they adopted, such as the Mu'tazila, the Khawarij, the Rawafid, the Qadariyyah, the Jabariyyah, etc. The need was thus felt to distinguish the mainstream majority of Muslims from these groups. Hence, the birth of the term "*Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l Jama'ah*". Prior to the emergence of these groups, there was no need to distinctly

classify mainstream Muslim beliefs; they were simply the أصل. Moreover, in this early period, there didn't exist many other sects to distinguish the Ahl as-Sunnah from.

Shaykh Fawzi al-'Anjari and Shaykh Hamad as-Sinan succinctly summarize this by saying⁵:

أهل السنة والجماعة مصطلح ظهر للدلالة على من كان على
منهج السلف الصالح من التمسك بالقرآن والسنن والآثار المروية عن
رسول الله ﷺ وعن أصحابه رضوان الله تعالى عليهم، ليميز عن
مذاهب المبتدعة وأهل الأهواء.

وإذا أطلق هذا المصطلح في كتب العلماء فالمقصود به الأشاعرة
والماتريدية وأصحاب الحديث^(١)؛ لأنهم هم الذين على ما كان عليه
رسول الله ﷺ، لم يبدلوا ولم يغيروا كما فعل غيرهم من أهل الزيغ
والابتداع.

The term “Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l Jama'ah” emerged to refer to those who upheld the approach of the righteous predecessors in holding fast to the Qur'an and the Sunnah which was passed down from Nabi ﷺ and the Sahabah, may Allah be pleased with them. This was done in order to distinguish the mainstream from the deviant groups of innovation and desire.

When this term is used in books of the 'Ulama, it refers to the Asharis, the Maturidis, and the Ashab al-Hadith. This is because they are the ones who uphold the beliefs espoused by the Prophet ﷺ. They did not change anything or deviate, as did others from heretical groups.

However, although the term 'Ahl as-Sunnah wa'l Jama'ah' did not gain widespread usage until later on, there is evidence for the usage of the term as early as the era of the sahabah. In Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr, under the ayah ﴿يَوْمَ تَبْيَضُّ وُجُوهٌ وَتَسْوَدُّ وُجُوهٌ﴾, Abdullah bin Abbas is reported to have said,

⁵ Al-'Anjari and Sinan, *Ahl al-Sunnah al-Asha'irah*, p. 80

يعني: يوم القيامة، حين تبيض وجوه أهل السنة والجماعة، وتسود وجوه أهل البدعة والفرقة

The Ash'ari and Maturidi madhahib are the accepted madhahib in 'aqidah. They are generally referred to as the *Ahl as-Sunnah wa'l Jama'ah*. Imam Murtada az-Zabidi says:

إذا أطلق أهل السنة والجماعة فالمراد بهم الأشاعرة والماتريدية قال الخيالي في حاشيته على شرح العقائد الأشاعرة هم أهل السنة والجماعة هذا هو المشهور في ديار خراسان والعراق والشام وأكثر الأقطار وديار ما وراء النهر يطلق ذلك على الماتريدية أصحاب الإمام أبي منصور و بين الطائفتين اختلاف في بعض المسائل لمسألة التكوين و غيرها هـ. وقال الكستلي في حاشيته عليه المشهور من أهل السنة في ديار خراسان والعراق والشام وأكثر الأقطار هم الأشاعرة أصحاب أبي الحسن الأشعري أول من خالف أبا علي الجبائي ورجع من مذهبه إلى السنة أي طريق النبي ﷺ والجماعة أي طريقة الصحابة رضي الله عنهم وفي ما وراء النهر الماتريدية أصحاب أبي منصور الماتريدي تلميذ أبي نصر العياضي تلميذ أبي بكر الجوزجاني صاحب أبي سليمان الجوزجاني صاحب محمد بن الحسن صاحب الإمام أبي حنيفة إتحاف السادة المتقين للزبيدي (ج 2: ص 6)

قال التاج السبكي وأنا أعلم كلهم أشاعرة لا أستثني أحدا والشافعية غالبهم اشاعرة إلا من لحق منهم بتجسيم أو اعتزال ممن لا يعبأ الله به والحنفية أكثرهم أشاعرة أعني يعتقدون عقيدة الأشعري لا يخرج منهم إلا من لحق منهم بالمعتزلة، والحنابلة أكثر فضلاء متقدميهم أشاعرة لا يخرج منهم إلا من لحق بأهل التجسيم وهم في هذه الفرقة من الحنابلة أكثر من غيرهم إتحاف السادة المتقين للزبيدي (ج 2: ص 7-8)

It should be noted that Imam Abu'l Hasan al-Ash'ari or Imam Abu Mansur al-Maturidi did not manufacture, concoct, or create new 'aqaa'id. Rather, they gathered, sorted, and codified the 'aqaa'id of the Ahl as-Sunnah wa'l Jama'ah. Imam Murtada al-Zabidi further states:

هذه المسائل التي تلقاها الإمامان الأشعري والماتريدي هي أصول الأئمة رحمهم الله تعالى. فالأشعري بنى كتبه على مسائل من مذهب الإمامين مالك والشافعي، أخذ ذلك بوسائط فأيدها وهذبها والماتريدي كذلك أخذها من نصوص الإمام أبو حنيفة و هي في خمسة كتب: الفقه الأكبر، والرسالة، والفقه الأبسط، وكتاب العلم والوصية

إتحاف السادة المتقين للزبيدي (ج 2: ص 13)

وليعلم أن كلا من الإمامين أبي الحسن وأبي منصور رضي الله عنهما و جزأهما عن الإسلام خيرا لم يبدعا من عندهما رأيا ولم يشتقا مذهبا، إنما هما مقرران لمذاهب السلف مناضلان عما كانت عليه

Having discussed the origin and formulation of the term “*Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l Jama'ah*”, we now must ask:

How do we know that it is the Asha'aris and Maturidis who constitute *Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l Jama'ah*?

After the Prophet ﷺ and the Sahabah, majority of Muslims who came thereafter maintained and upheld the 'aqidah of Prophet ﷺ and the Sahabah. As time passed, heretical groups began to splinter off this mainstream. As was mentioned previously, the term “*Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l Jama'ah*” emerged to refer to those people who maintained the beliefs of the Prophet ﷺ, the Sahabah, and the early Muslims. As these heretical groups began to become more vocal and prominent, with *I'tizal* even

being adopted the official state religion during the early ‘Abbasid era, scholars from the *Ahl al-Sunnah wa’l Jama‘ah* rose up to defend mainstream, orthodox ‘aqidah. One prominent scholar who advocated and defended mainstream Islamic belief was Imam Abu’l Hasan al-Ash‘ari. Another scholar who did so was Imam Abu Mansur al-Maturidi. As mentioned previously, these scholars did not advocate anything new, rather they simply upheld mainstream Islamic belief. Followers of mainstream Islamic belief, the ‘aqidah espoused by Nabi ﷺ and the Sahabah, began to attribute themselves to these two great imams in order to affirm that they adhered to the ‘aqidah of Nabi ﷺ and the Sahabah, and did not ascribe to any deviant beliefs which had emerged thereafter. Imam عضد الدين الإيجي says:

(وأما الفرقة الناجية المستثناة الذين قال النبي - ﷺ - فيهم "هم الذين على ما أنا عليه وأصحابي" فهم الأشاعرة والسلف من المحدثين وأهل السنة والجماعة، ومذهبهم خالٍ من بدع هؤلاء) اهـ.

"The one saved sect, exempted (from the hadith describing the ummah splitting into 73 sects), described by the Prophet ﷺ to be "those who remain firm on what my companions and I believe in", is comprised of the Ash‘aris, the early scholars of hadith and Ahl as-Sunnah wa’l Jama‘ah. Their creed is free from the innovations of (deviant sects)."

Imam Jalal ad-Din al-Dawani says⁶:

⁶ Al-Dawani, *Sharh al-‘Aqa’id al-‘Adudiyyah*, v. 1, p. 34

وقال الإمام الجلال الدواني رحمه الله تعالى (شرح العقائد العضدية ١ /

: ٣٤)

(الفرقة الناجية، وهم الأشاعرة أي التابعون في الأصول للشيخ أبي الحسن... فإن قلت: كيف حكم بأن الفرقة الناجية هم الأشاعرة؟ وكل فرقة تزعم أنها ناجية؟ قلت سياق الحديث مشعر بأنهم - يعني الفرقة الناجية - المعتقدون بما روي عن النبي ﷺ وأصحابه، وذلك إنما ينطبق على الأشاعرة، فإنهم متمسكون في عقائدهم بالأحاديث الصحيحة المنقولة عنه ﷺ وعن أصحابه، ولا يتجاوزون عن ظواهرها إلا لضرورة، ولا يسترسلون مع عقولهم كالمعتزلة) اهـ.

“The saved sect is the Asha‘irah. They followed the methodology of Shaykh Abu’l Hasan. If you say, “How can you conclude that the saved sect is the Asha‘irah, when every sect claims that it is the saved one?” I would respond by saying that the hadith indicated that the saved sect is comprised of the believers in what was transmitted from the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions. This can only apply to the Ash‘aris. They are the ones who cling in belief to authentic hadiths that are passed down from the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions. They don’t opt for figurative meanings except when necessary. Nor do they subject hadiths to reason like the Mu‘tazilis.”

This is further substantiated by the fact that overwhelming majority of ‘ulama throughout Islamic history have been adherents of the ‘Ash‘ari and Maturidi schools of ‘aqidah. These scholars made significant contributions in all branches of ‘ilm, including, but not limited to, *hadith, tafsir, fiqh, qira’at*, and more. An exhaustive list of the names of these scholars can never be presented due to their sheer number. We will thus instead suffice with a few statements of prominent scholars. Imam ‘Taj al-Din as-Subki says⁷:

⁷ Al-Subki, *Tabaqat al-Shafi‘iyyah al-Kubra*, v. 4, p. 32

و هو (يعنى مذهب الأشعري) هو مذهب المحدثين حديثا وقديما

“The school of the Ash‘aris has been the school of the both the earlier and later-day scholars of hadith.”

Imam Abdullah bin ‘Alawi al-Haddad says⁸:

وقال الإمام العلامة عبد الله بن علوي الحداد رحمه الله تعالى (نيل المرام شرح عقيدة الإسلام للإمام الحداد الصفحة ٨):
(اعلم أن مذهب الأشاعرة في الاعتقاد هو ما كان عليه جماهير أمة الإسلام علماؤها ودهماؤها، إذ المنتسبون إليهم والساكنون طريقهم كانوا أئمة أهل العلوم قاطبة على مرّ الأيام والسنين، وهم أئمة علم التوحيد والكلام والتفسير والقراءة والفقه وأصوله والحديث وفنونه والتصوف واللغة والتاريخ) اهـ.

“Bear in mind that the school of the Ash‘aris has been the school of creed of the overwhelming majority of the scholars and leaders of the Muslim ummah. Scholars of all branches of knowledge, throughout the ages, have ascribed themselves to them and tread their path. They were scholars of theology, tafsir, qira’ah, fiqh, usul al-fiqh, hadith, the related subjects of hadith, tasanwuf, Arabic, and history.

Though we have stated that the Ash‘aris and Maturidis constitute Ahl as-Sunnah, this does at all entail that Non-Ash‘aris/Maturidis are outside the fold of Islam. Imam Ibn Asakir and Imam Bayhaqi have recorded that Imam Abu’l Hasan al-Ashari said shortly before he passed away

اشهدوا علي أني لا أكفر احد من أهل القبلة

Bear witness that I do not declare anyone from the Ahl al-Qiblah to be kafir.

⁸ Al-Haddad, *Nayl al-Maram*, p. 8

Similarly, Imām Ṭahāwī states in his monumental treatise outlining the creed of the Ahl as-Sunnah, *al-‘Aqīdah at-Ṭahāwīyyah*: “We do not declare anyone from the Ahl al-Qiblah to be *kafīr* due to a sin”

لا نخرج أحدا من الإسلام إلا . لا نكفر أحدا من أهل القبلة بذنب
 sins they commit is the madhab of the khawārij. The mantra of Ahl as-Sunnah is لا يخرج أحد من الإسلام إلا
A person does not leave the fold of Islam except by denying that which entered him into it. – بحود ما ادخله فيه

We have stated above that Imam Ash‘ari and Imam Maturidi upheld the *manhaj* of the salaf. It would now be pertinent for us to take a deeper look into what the *manhaj* of the salaf actually was. When confronted with any *ayat* or hadiths that were ambiguous in their meaning, and the apparent meaning seemed to be unbefitting of the majesty of Allah ﷻ, the salaf would by-and-large, refrain from taking the apparent meaning of the verse, and instead consign the actual meaning to Allah. In certain instances, the salaf would offer an alternative meaning that was more befitting of the majesty and grandeur of Allah. Imam Ash‘ari and Imam Maturidi continued this precedent of refraining from taking the apparent meaning of verses and hadiths that seemed to be unbefitting of the greatness of Allah, and instead opted for meanings that were more befitting of the greatness of Allah ﷻ. This was in sharp contrast with other groups that had emerged at the time that either insisted on farfetched interpretations of verses, or would adamantly take the literal meaning of *ayat*, regardless of whether those meanings were befitting of the majesty of Allah ﷻ or not.

Now that we have established that Imam Ash‘ari and Imam Maturidi upheld the ‘aqīdah of their pious predecessors, we will take a closer look at their approach, particularly regarding ambiguous *ayat* (*mutasabihat*).

The various approaches of understanding *mutashābihāt*

In one of the beginning verses of Surah Ali ‘Imran, Allah ﷻ describes to us that verses of the Quran are divided into two categories: the *muhkamāt* (verses that are decisive and unequivocal in their meaning) and the *mutashābihāt* (ambiguous verses). Allah ﷻ says:

﴿هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْهُ آيَاتٌ مُحْكَمَاتٌ هُنَّ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ وَأُخَرُ مُتَشَابِهَاتٌ فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَابَهَ مِنْهُ ابْتِغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ وَابْتِغَاءَ تَأْوِيلِهِ وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَالرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ يَقُولُونَ آمَنَّا بِهِ كُلٌّ مِنْ عِنْدِ رَبِّنَا وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُوا الْأَلْبَابِ﴾

“It is He Who has revealed the Book to you; some of its verses are muhkamāt (clear cut), they are the basis of the Book, and others are ambiguous; then as for those in whose hearts there is perversity they follow the part of it which is ambiguous, seeking to mislead and seeking to give it (their own) interpretation. but none knows its interpretation except Allah, and those who are firmly rooted in knowledge say: We believe in it, it is all from our Lord; and none remember except those having understanding.” (3:7)

From this ayah, we note the following points:

- The *muhkamāt* are described to be أم الكتاب (lit. ‘the root/foundation of the book’).
- These verses form the basis for which the Quran should be understood. Any interpretation of the *mutashābihāt* (ambiguous verses) should be in line with the *muhkamāt*.

There are two correct approaches to dealing with the *sifāt mutashābihāt*:

1) Tafwīd (ta’wīl ijmālī), and— In this approach, the scholar will first do *tanẓīh* (negate any deficiency from Allah or likeness of Allah to His creation), and thereafter consign the rest of the meaning to Allah.

2) Ta'wīl Tafsīlī – In this approach, the scholar will offer an actual explanation for a particular ambiguous verse or hadith.

Earlier scholars would generally adopt for the first approach, although there are many instances in which they opted for ta'wīl tafsīlī. They would simply believe in the ambiguous word, without any need for explanation, embodying the spirit of the verse ﴿وَالرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ يَقُولُونَ آمَنَّا بِهِ كُلٌّ مِنْ عِنْدِ رَبِّنَا﴾

“Those firmly ground in knowledge say, ‘we believe in it (the ambiguous verses). It is all from our Lord.’”

Thus, when encountered with an ambiguous term, the يد of Allah for example, they would say نؤمن

بأنه لا شيء.

Imam Nawawi states⁹:

ونعتقد لها معنى يليق بجلال الله تعالى وعظمته، مع اعتقاد الجازم أن الله تعالى ليس كمثله شيء وأنه منزّه عن التجسّم والانتقال والتحيز في جهة و عن سائر

صفات المخلوق

“We believe that (these verses and attributes) have a meaning that befits the majesty and grandeur of Allah ﷻ. We do this while maintaining the belief that there is nothing else like Allah ﷻ, and that Allah ﷻ is free from any anthropomorphism, movement (in physical space), occupation of any area or direction, and from all other qualities of created beings.”

⁹ Nawawi, *al-Minhaj*, v. 3, p. 19

This highlights how scholars, even when adopting *tafwid* (consigning the meaning to Allah without delving into interpretation), would first do *tanẓih*, i.e. negate anything from Allah that does not befit His majesty.

The latter day scholars of Ahl as-Sunnah generally opt for the second approach. They do ta'wil tafsili, though without believing it to be fard to do so. These latter day scholars generally feel that their approach is more suited to their time. Earlier scholars were able to suffice with terse explanations, relying on the presence of giants such as Imām Abū Hanīfah to clear any confusion that would arise. Due to the scarcity of such luminaries in later times, the scholars of those times felt the need to explain a bit more, to prevent people from falling to confusion.

It should be understood though that the salaf **did not** simply take the apparent meaning of ayāt. Rather, they would do ta'wil ijmalī. The definition of ta'wil is صرف النص عن الظاهر , to opt for a meaning not immediately apparent from the text. The salaf would first do *tanẓih*, negate any similarity between Allah and His creation, and thereafter consign meaning to Allah.

Later-day groups on the other hand, do not do the first aspect of ta'wil ijmalī, which is صرف النص عن الظاهر (to not take the literal meaning). Rather, they take the apparent/literal meaning. When confronted with a صفة متشابهة (an ambiguous attribute), like the يد of Allah for example, they do اثبات المعنى الحقيقي (affirm the literal meaning), even if appended with a statement like "كما يليق لشأنه" (as it befits His majesty) this still amounts to, or at least approaches تجسيم (anthropomorphism).

The approach of the salaf was never to affirm literal meanings of ambiguous verses. Rather, on some level, ta'wil is actually established from the salaf.

For example, when the mu'tazilis sought to substantiate their claim that the Quran is created by citing the hadith تجيء البقرة و آل عمران

“*Surah Baqarah and Ali ‘Imrān will come (and intercede for the one who would regularly recite them).*”

They claimed that the act of coming (يجيء) is created, so this necessarily implies that the Quran is created. Imam Ahmad responded by saying that the hadith does not mean that the two surahs of the Quran will physically come, but rather their reward will come (يجيء ثوابهما).

In order to understand ‘aqidah from the Quran, two important things are required:

- 1) التمكن باللغة العربية (a firm grasp of the Arabic language)
- 2) قوة استعداد العقل (good understanding)

Allah ﷻ has said, ﴿إنا جعلناه قرآنا عربيا لعلكم تعقلون﴾ (43:3) and ﴿إنا أنزلناه قرآنا عربيا لعلكم تعقلون﴾ (12:2). In addition to understanding the Arabic language, we must be well versed in the *muhkamāt* of the Qur’ān and let our understanding of the *muhkamāt* guide our understanding and approach to the *mutashābihāt*.

Muhkam ayāt declare Allah ﷻ to be supreme, eternally powerful, and pure of any resemblance to His creation. Examples of *muhkam* ayāt are:

﴿أفمن يخلق كمن لا يخلق﴾ ﴿هل تعلم له سميا﴾ ﴿و لم يكن له كفوا احد﴾ ﴿ليس كمثله شيء﴾

هو الأول بلا ابتداء ، ان الله لا يشبه شيئا من خلقه و لا يشبهه شيء من

خلقه. ولا تحويه الجهات الست كسائر المبتدعات .

Furthermore, the entire surah ikhlas is *muhkam*. In the surah, the word "أحد" does not mean "one".

Rather, it means الذي لا يتجزى – that being who is not composed of parts. One of the names of Allah is

هو الواحد لا من طريق العدد، و لكن من طريق أنه لا شريك له. In explaining this, Imam Abu Hanīfah said,

Another *muhkam* ayah is ﴿هُوَ الْأَوَّلُ﴾ (57:3). In this sentence, both the *mubtada'* and the *khabr* are

ma'rifah (the *mubtada'* is a *damir*, which is always *ma'rifah*). As the 'ulamā' of *Nahw* and *Balāghah* have explained, the *mubtada'* and *khabr* both being *ma'rifah* creates the meaning of حصر (exclusivity). This

implies that Allah ﷻ was the absolute first, who preceded everything, including both physical

direction (جهة) and place (مكان). This is further explained in a hadith – كان الله ولم يكن شيء غيره.

Let us now briefly take a practical example in applying the *muhkamāt* to our understanding of

mutashābihāt. In many places in the Qur'ān, Allah ﷻ mentions the word *istinā'*. For example, in surah

Taha, Allah ﷻ says, ﴿الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَى﴾. The word *istinā'* can have many meanings. For example, it

can mean:

- (28:14) ولما بلغ أشده استوى – (to gain full strength) قوي
- ﴿كَرَزِعَ أَخْرَجَ شَطْأَهُ فَآزَرَهُ فَاسْتَغْلَظَ فَاسْتَوَى عَلَى سُوقِهِ﴾ – (to stand up) استقام
- قد استوى بشر على العراق من غير سيف ودم مہراق – (to take control of something) الإستعمال
- واستوت على الجودي – (to settle firmly) استقر

As we have seen, *mutashābih* words tend to have many meanings. This does not mean that all the meanings fit in the context. We must distance ourselves from any possible meanings that will

potentially attribute deficiency to Allah ﷻ. *Istima'* is commonly thought to be sitting (جلوس). This meaning is not consistent with the majesty of Allah ﷻ. When someone sits on something, they are being supported by it, i.e. they are محمول. Furthermore, this is a sign of dependency (احتياج). Moreover, when someone sits on something, they are either the size of the thing they sitting on, larger than it, or smaller than it. Either way, it indicates that they are physically bounded (محدود). The *muhkamāt* indicate that Allah ﷻ is pure of any physical boundary - تعالى الله عن الحدود.

From this, we can see that when confronted with a *mutashābih* verse or hadith, we cannot take any meaning that results in attributing *naqs* (deficiency) to Allah ﷻ. For example, Allah ﷻ says, ﴿وَمَا كَانَ رَبُّكَ نَسِيًّا﴾. The *muhkamāt* tell us ﴿نَسُوا اللَّهَ فَنَسِيَهُمْ﴾. Forgetting is a defect and a sign of weakness. We therefore cannot say about Allah ﷻ ينسى كما يليق بشأنه (He 'forgets' as befits His Majesty) because it does not make sense to attribute a defect to Allah ﷻ and then declare Allah ﷻ pure of defects. Similarly, you cannot tell someone انت حمار كما يليق بشأنك. We therefore must adopt a secondary interpretation of this ayah, or in other words, do *ta'wīl*. We can say that the word نسيان was mentioned مشاكلةً (with its actual meaning not intended, but rather mentioned to match what was stated immediately before – “they forgot Allah”). Furthermore, نسيان also means الترك عمدًا - to intentionally leave something. Adopting this interpretation, the ayah would mean نَسُوا اللَّهَ فَنَسِيَهُمْ – “They left Allah, so He left them.”

From this, we can see that in some scenarios, *ta'wil* is necessary. *Ta'wil* is not merely a latter-day development. Rather, *ta'wil* is established very clearly in *ahadith qudsiyyah* from Allah ﷻ Himself. In a hadith qudsi, it is reported that Allah ﷻ will say to someone on the Day of Judgment:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ -صلى الله عليه وسلم- « إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ يَقُولُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ مَرِضْتُ فَلَمْ تَعُدْنِي. قَالَ يَا رَبِّ كَيْفَ أَعُوذُكَ وَأَنْتَ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ. قَالَ أَمَا عَلِمْتَ أَنَّ عَبْدِي فُلَانًا مَرِضَ فَلَمْ تَعُدَّهُ أَمَا عَلِمْتَ أَنَّكَ لَوْ عُدْتَهُ لَوَجَدْتَنِي عِنْدَهُ

I became ill but you did not visit me.... The person will say, “My Lord! How can I do this when you are the Lord of all the worlds?” Allah ﷻ will say, “Such-and-such slave of mine became sick but you did not visit him. Do you not know that if you visited him, you would have found me with him?” (Sahih Muslim, 6721)

It is a Muslim’s natural instinct to declare Allah ﷻ pure from any defects or illnesses. The person being questioned knew that sicknesses is not consistent with the majesty of Allah ﷻ. He therefore asked how that was possible. Allah ﷻ responded by teaching him the *ta'wil* of the hadith, saying, “My slave became sick”. With this said, we can also see that the literal meaning of the second part of the hadith (“Had you visited him, you would have found Me with him”) cannot possibly be intended. Extrapolating the *ta'wil* from the first part of the hadith, we can interpret the second part of the hadith to be “Had you visited him, you would have found My reward/mercy with him” - *ولو عدته لوجدت ثوابي\رحمتي عنده* -

Before proceeding, we should note that in addition to the verse in Surah Ali ‘Imran clearly distinguishing between the ayāt and sifāt of *mubkamāt* and the *mutashābihāt*, we should note that the usage of the Quran also differs when discussing both. In al-Qawl al-Tamām, it is stated:

و خلاصة الأمر أن الصفات غير الخبرية سيق لها النص أصالة و أغلب الصفات الخبرية لم يسبق النص لها، وإنما ذكرت في النص عرضاً والفرق بين الحالتين معروف في كتب الأصول

“To summarize, the Sifat ghayr al-Khabariyyah (attributes of Allah that a person could rationally deduce and would attribute to Allah independent of a textual source - like power, mercy, sight, hearing, etc.) are mentioned in Quran purposefully, as the actual subject of discussion. On the other hand, the majority of Sifat Khabariyyah (attributes of Allah that a person would not rationally deduce, and would not attribute to Allah independent of a textual source - like ‘يد’, ‘عين’ etc.), are mentioned in the Quran by-the-way, in reference to something else, not as the actual subject of discussion. The difference between the two is explained in books of theology.”

Majority of the sifāt that are dictated by the *aql* are mentioned in ayaat بذاتها. However, other *sifat* of Allah are mentioned تبعاً only, not مقصوداً بذاتها (by-the-way/in reference to something else). For example the Quran says: ﴿تَجْرِي بِأَعْيُنِنَا جَزَاءَ لِمَن كَانَ كُفْرًا﴾، ﴿يَلْ يَدَاهُ مَبْسُوطَتَانِ يُنفِقُ كَيْفَ يَشَاءُ﴾.

Also, Muslims are explicitly commanded to believe in the sifāt ghayr khabariyyah. Allah ﷻ says:

﴿فَاعْلَم أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ﴾، ﴿وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ﴾، ﴿وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ﴾

With other sifāt however, there is never any explicit command to believe in them. There is no ayah that says آمنوا أن الله له عين\اعلموا أن الله متصف باليدين

We will now address some common questions that arise regarding Ash‘ari/Maturidi ‘aqīdah.

Did the ‘Asharis effectively assume the role of the Mu‘tazilis?

People commonly object that in an effort to refute the Mu‘tazilis, the rationalists, the Ash‘aris and Maturidis effectively assumed the role of the Mu‘tazilis. They began explaining ‘aqīdah in rational/philosophical terms, and carried on with that.

As mentioned before, the ‘Asharis and Maturidis advocated and upheld the mainstream, orthodox aqīdah that was espoused by the Prophet ﷺ and the Sahabah. They defended this aqīdah against the mu‘tazilah and other groups, and, in order for these other groups to understand, the Ash‘aris and Maturidis engaged with them in their own terms. Hence, they did use philosophical terms and arguments to defend mainstream ‘aqīdah. This was simply the language of academia at the time. This is not at all a sign of deviancy. Rather, this demonstrates the versatility of the scholars of Ahl as-Sunnah and the firmness of true belief.

Hereunder we will present some statements from various scholars of Ahl as-Sunnah throughout the centuries demonstrating how the ‘ulama of Ahl as-Sunnah upheld the ‘aqīdah of Nabi ﷺ, the Sahabah, and the Salaf. Please see the attached pages.

السؤال الثالث عشر والرابع عشر:

ما قولكم في أمثال قوله تعالى: ﴿الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَى﴾ (طه: 5)؟ هل تجوزون إثبات جهة ومكان للباري تعالى، أم كيف رأيكم فيه؟

الجواب

قولنا في أمثال تلك الآيات: إنا نؤمن بها ولا يقال كيف؟، و نؤمن بأن الله سبحانه وتعالى متعالٍ ومنزه عن صفات المخلوقين وعن سمات النقص والحدوث، كما هو رأي قدمائنا.

وأما ما قال المتأخرون من أئمتنا في تلك الآيات، يؤولونها بتأويلات صحيحة سائغة في اللغة والشرع، بأنه يمكن أن يكون المراد من الإستواء: الإستيلاء، ومن اليد: القدرة، إلى غير ذلك، تقريبًا إلى أفهام القاصرين، فحق أيضًا عندنا.

وأما الجهة والمكان، فلا نجوز إثباتهما له تعالى ونقول: إنه تعالى منزّه ومتعالٍ عنهما وعن جميع سمات الحدوث.

مقتبس من "المهتد على المفنّد" للإمام المحدث مولانا الشيخ خليل أحمد السهارنفوري (المتوفى سنة 1927 م)

من العقائد السّنية عند العلماء في القرن الأول الهجري THE SUNNIYY CREED AMONG SCHOLARS OF THE 1ST CENTURY

Sayyiduna

ALIYY IBN ABI TALIB



سيدنا علي بن أبي طالب



قال مصباح التوحيد وصباح التفريد الصحابي الجليل والخليفة الرابع الراشد سيدنا علي بن أبي طالب رضي الله عنه (المتوفى سنة ٤٠ هـ) ما نصه:
"كان الله ولا مكان وهو الآن على ما كان" اهـ. أي بلا مكان. رواه أبو منصور البغدادي في كتاب (الفرق بين الفرق).

Sayyid

^Aliyy Ibn Abi Talib (died 40 AH), may Allah raise his rank, the eminent and renowned companion and one of the most distinguished in teaching Tawhid (Islamic Creed) said: **"Allah is eternally existent and place is not, and He still exists as He eternally was (i.e. without a place)"**. Narrated by Abu Mansur al-Baghdadiyy in his book 'al-Farq bayn al-Firq'.

Sayyiduna

ZAYNUL-^ABIDIN



سيدنا زين العابدين



قال التابعي الجليل الإمام زين العابدين علي بن الحسين رضي الله عنهما (المتوفى سنة ٩٤ هـ) في كتابه (الصحيحة السّجّادية) ما نصه:
"أنت الله الذي لا يحويك مكان" اهـ.

In his book 'as-Sahifah as-Sajjadiyyah' Sayyid Zaynul-^Abidin ^Aliyy Ibnul-Hussayn (died 94 AH), may Allah raise his rank, a great successor of the companions (Tabi^iyy) said: **"You are Allah, the One who is not confined to place"**.

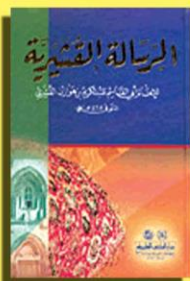
من العقائد السنية عند العلماء في القرن الثاني الهجري THE SUNNIYY CREED AMONG SCHOLARS OF THE 2ND CENTURY

Sayyiduna

JA'FAR AS-SADIQ



سيدنا جعفر الصادق



قال الإمام جعفر الصادق رضي الله عنه (المتوفى سنة ١٤٨ هـ) ما نصه:

”من زعم أن الله في شيء أو من شيء أو على شيء فقد أشرك إذ لو كان على شيء لكان محمولا ولو كان في شيء لكان محصوراً ولو كان من شيء لكان محدثاً - أي مخلوقاً -“ اهـ. ذكره القشيري في (رسالته).

Sayyid Ja'far as-Sadiq (died 148 AH), may Allah raise his rank, said: “He who claims that Allah is in anything or on anything or from anything commits shirk (type of blasphemy). Because, had He been on anything, He would have been carried, had He been in anything, He would have been contained, and had He been from anything, He would have been a creation”. Narrated by Imam al-Qushayriyy in his book ‘ar-Risalah al-Qushayriyyah’.

IMAM ABU HANIFAH



الإمام أبو حنيفة



قال الإمام المجتهد أبو حنيفة النعمان بن ثابت رضي الله عنه (المتوفى سنة ١٥٠ هـ) في كتابه (الفقه الأيسر) ما نصه:

”كان الله تعالى ولا مكان كان قبل أن يخلق الخلق كان ولم يكن أين ولا خلق ولا شيء وهو خالق كل شيء“ اهـ.

In his book ‘Al-Fiqhul-Absat’ the great Imam and Mujtahid Abu Hanifah an-Nu'man Ibn Thabit (died 150 AH), may Allah raise his rank, said: “Allah is eternally existent and eternally place did not exist. Allah eternally exists before creating the creation. Allah eternally exists and eternally there was no place or any other creation and He is the Creator of everything”.

من العقائد السنية عند العلماء في القرن الثالث الهجري THE SUNNIYY CREED AMONG SCHOLARS OF THE 3RD CENTURY

IMAM ASH-SHAFI'YY



الإمام الشافعي



قال الإمام المجتهد محمد بن إدريس الشافعي رضي الله عنه (المتوفى سنة ٢٠٤ هـ) ما نصه :

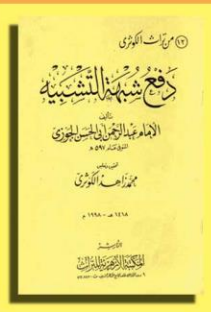
”إنه تعالى كان ولا مكان فخلق المكان وهو على صفة الأزلية كما كان قبل خلقه المكان لا يجوز عليه التغير في ذاته ولا التبديل في صفاته“ اهـ. كما نقله عنه الزبيدي في كتابه (إتحاف السادة المتقين).

The great *Imam* and *Mujtahid* *Muhammad Ibn Idris Ash-Shafi'yy* (died 204 AH), may *Allah* raise his rank, said: “*Allah*, the Exalted is eternally existent and eternally, place did not exist. *Allah* created the place while He is still attributed with Eternity as He was before creating the place. It is intellectually impossible for change to occur in His Self or for alteration to happen in His Attributes”. Related by *Imam az-Zabidiyy* in his book ‘*Ithaf as-Sadatil-Muttaqin*’.

IMAM AHMAD IBN HAMBAL



الإمام أحمد ابن حنبل



كان الإمام المجتهد أحمد بن حنبل رضي الله عنه (المتوفى سنة ٢٤١ هـ) لا يقول بالجهة للبارئ.

نقل ذلك عنه الإمام الحافظ ابن الجوزي الحنبلي في كتابه (دفع شبهة التشبيه).

“*Imam Ahmad Ibn Hambal* (died 241 AH) never attributed directionality to *Allah*.” Related by *Imam Ibn Al-Jawziyy* in his book ‘*Daf' Shubhatit-Tashbih*’.

من العقائد السّنية عند العلماء في القرن الرابع الهجري THE SUNNIYY CREED AMONG SCHOLARS OF THE 4TH CENTURY

IMAM ABU JA^FAR AT-TAHAWIYY



الإمام أبو جعفر الطحاوي



قال الإمام الفقيه أبو جعفر الطحاوي (المتوفى سنة ٣٢١ هـ) في رسالته (العقيدة الطحاوية) ما نصه :

”وتعالى - أي الله - عن الحدود والغايات والأركان والأعضاء والأدوات لا تحويه الجهات الست كسائر المبتدعات” اهـ.

In his book '*al-[^]Aqidah at-Tahawiyyah*' the great *Faqih* and *Imam* Abu Ja[^]far at-Tahawiyy (born 237 AH, died 321 AH), said: “**Allah is utterly clear of all boundaries, extremes, sides, organs, and instruments. The six directions do not contain Him, as they contain all created things**”.

HAFIDH IBN HIBBAN



الحافظ ابن حبان



قال الحافظ محمد بن حبان (المتوفى سنة ٣٥٤ هـ) في كتابه المشهور (صحيح ابن حبان) ما نصه :

”كان - الله - ولا زمان ولا مكان” اهـ.

In his well-known book '*Sahih Ibn Hibban*' Al-Hafidh Muhammad Ibn Hibban (died 354 AH) said: “**Allah is eternally existent and eternally no time or place did exist**”.

من العقائد السنية عند العلماء في القرن الخامس الهجري THE SUNNIYY CREED AMONG SCHOLARS OF THE 5TH CENTURY

IMAM IBN FURAK



الإمام ابن فورك



قال الإمام أبو بكر محمد بن الحسن المعروف بابن فورك (المتوفى سنة ٤٠٦ هـ) في كتابه (مُشْكِلُ الْحَدِيثِ) ما نصه :
” لا يجوز على الله تعالى الحلول في الأماكن لاستحالة كونه محدودًا ومتناهيًا وذلك لاستحالة كونه محدثًا ” اهـ.

In his book ‘*Mushkilul-Hadith*’ Imam Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn al-Husayn, also known as Ibn Furak (died 406 AH) said: **“It is intellectually impossible for Allah, the Exalted, to occupy places, by reason of the impossibility of limits and ends applying to Him which is in turn due to the impossibility that Allah is created”.**

IMAM ASH-SHIRAZIYY



الإمام الشيرازي



قال الفقيه الإمام الشيخ أبو إسحاق الشيرازي الشافعي (المتوفى سنة ٤٧٦ هـ) في كتابه (الإشارة إلى مذهب أهل الحق) ما نصه :
” إنه - أي الله تعالى - كان ولا مكان ثم خلق المكان وهو الآن على ما عليه كان ” اهـ.

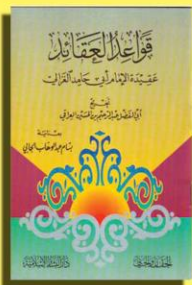
In his book ‘*Al-Isharah ila madhhab ahli'l-Haqq*’ (The Guide to the methodology of the People of Truth) Imam and Faqih Abu Ishaq ash-Shiraziyy (died 476 AH), a great Shafi'iyy scholar said: **“Allah is eternally existent and eternally place did not exist. Allah created the place, and He is still existent as He eternally was (i.e. without a place)”.**

من العقائد السنية عند العلماء في القرن السادس الهجري THE SUNNIYY CREED AMONG SCHOLARS OF THE 6TH CENTURY

IMAM AL-GHAZALIYY



الإمام الغزالي



قال الشيخ أبو حامد محمد بن محمد الغزالي الشافعي
(المتوفى سنة ٥٠٥ هـ) في كتابه (قواعد العقائد) ما نصه:
"تعالى - أي الله - عن أن يحويه مكان، كما تقدس عن أن يحده زمان،
بل كان قبل خلق الزمان والمكان وهو الآن على ما عليه كان" اهـ.

In his book '*Qawa'id al-Aqa'id*' Shaykh Abu Hamid Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Ghazaliyy (died 505 AH), a great *Shafi'iyy* scholar said: "**Allah, the Exalted, is clear from containment by place and is clear from restriction by time. Rather, He is eternally existent before creating time and place, and He is still existent as He eternally was (i.e. without a place)**".

AL-QADI IBN AL-ARABIYY



القاضي ابن العربي



قال القاضي أبو بكر ابن العربي المالكي الأندلسي
(المتوفى سنة ٥٤٣ هـ) في كتابه (القبس في شرح موطأ مالك بن
أنس) ما نصه:
"البارئ يتقدس عن أن يُحدَّ بالجهات أو أن تكتفه الأقطار" اهـ.

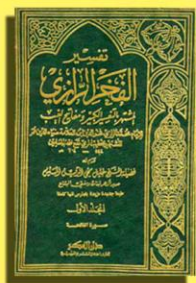
In his book '*al-Qabas fi sharh Muwatta' Malik Ibn Anas*' Al-Qadi (The Judge) Abu Bakr ibn al-Arabiyy (died 543 AH), a great *Malikiyy* scholar from Andalusia (presently known as Spain) said: "**Allah, Who is 'Al-Bari' (The Creator) is clear from the limitation of the six directions or the envelopment of places**".

من العقائد السنية عند العلماء في القرن السابع الهجري THE SUNNIYY CREED AMONG SCHOLARS OF THE 7TH CENTURY

IMAM AR-RAZIYY



الإمام الرازي



قال المفسر فخر الدين الرازي (المتوفى سنة ٦٠٦ هـ) في تفسيره المسمى (التفسير الكبير) ما نصه :

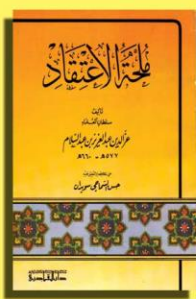
” قوله تعالى : [وهو العلي العظيم] لا يجوز أن يكون المراد بكونه علياً العلوّ بالجهة والمكان لما ثبتت الدلالة على فسادِه ، فوجب أن يكون المراد من العلي المتعالي عن مشابهة الممكّنات ومناسبة المحدثات . ”

In his book authored on interpreting the *Qur'an* known as '*At-Tafsirul-Kabir*' Imam Fakhrud-Din ar-Raziyy (died 606 AH), said: “Regarding the *Ayah*: { **وهو العلي العظيم** } it is impossible for the meaning of the word '*Aliyy*', when attributed to *Allah*, to refer to aboveness in terms of an upward direction or place, as evidence confirms the fallacy therein. Hence, this mandates that the meaning of the word '*Aliyy*' is that *Allah* is clear of resembling all intellectual possibilities and of any similarity to the creation”.

SHAYKH IBN ^ABDIS-SALAM



الشيخ ابن عبد السلام



قال سلطان العلماء الشيخ عزّ الدين ابن عبد السلام (المتوفى سنة ٦٦٠ هـ) في كتابه (مُلحة الاعتقاد) في حق الله تعالى ما نصه :

” ليس بجسم مصوّر ولا جوهر محدود مُقدّر ولا يشبه شيئاً ولا يشبهه شيء ولا تحيط به الجهات ولا تكتنفه الأرضون ولا السماوات كان قبل أن كَوّن الأكوان، ودبر الزمان وهو الآن على ما عليه كان . ”

In his book '*Mulhatul-I'tiqad*' Shaykh ^Izzud-Din ibn ^Abdis-Salam (died 660 AH) said in reference to *Allah*: “*Allah* is not a body and thus Has no form, He is not an entity and thus Has no measured limits. He does not resemble anything and nothing resembles Him. The six directions do not surround Him, nor do the earths and skies enclose Him. He is eternally existent before creating the creations. He created time, and He still exists as He eternally was (i.e. without a place)”.

من العقائد السنية عند العلماء في القرن الثامن الهجري THE SUNNIYY CREED AMONG SCHOLARS OF THE 8TH CENTURY

AL-QADI IBN JAMA[^]AH



القاضي ابن جماعة



قال القاضي بدر الدين محمد بن إبراهيم المعروف بابن جماعة الشافعي (المتوفى سنة ٧٣٣ هـ) في كتابه (إيضاح الدليل) ما نصه :

” كان الله ولا زمان ولا مكان وهو الآن على ما عليه كان ” اهـ.

In his book '*Idahud-Dalil*' Al-Qadi Badrud-Din Muhammad ibn Ibrahim known as Ibn Jama[^]ah ash-Shafi[^]yy (died 733 AH) said: “**Allah is eternally existent and eternally no time or place did exist. He still exists as He eternally was (i.e. without the need for place or time)**”.

HAFIDH ABU HAYYAN



الحافظ أبو حيان



قال المفسر المقرئ النحوي محمد بن يوسف المعروف بأبي حيان الأندلسي (المتوفى سنة ٧٤٥ هـ) في كتابه (البحر المحيط) عند تفسيره قوله تعالى :

[ولله من في السماوات والأرض ومن عنده لا يستكبرون عن عبادته] (الآية ١٩ سورة الأنبياء) ما نصه : ” وعندنا لا يراد بها ظرف المكان لأنه تعالى منزّه عن المكان بل المعنى شرف المكانة وعلو المنزلة ” اهـ.

In his book '*al-Bahrul-Muhit*' explaining verse 19 of *Surat al-Anbiya* the great linguist and interpreter and reciter of the Holy *Qur'an*, Muhammad Ibn Yusuf known as Abu Hayyan al-Andalusiiyy (died 745 AH) said: “**The word '*inda*' in this *Ayah* does not have the function of an adverb of place because Allah is clear of occupying places. Rather, it is used in the context of honourable status and high standing**”.

من العقائد السنية عند العلماء في القرن التاسع الهجري THE SUNNIYY CREED AMONG SCHOLARS OF THE 9TH CENTURY

HAFIDH AL-[^]IRAQIYY



الحافظ ولي الدين العراقي



قال الحافظ المحدث ولي الدين أبو زرعة أحمد بن عبد الرحيم العراقي (المتوفى سنة ٨٢٦هـ) في كتابه (طرح التثريب في شرح التقريب) في تفسير قول النبي: "فهو عنده فوق العرش" ما نصه:

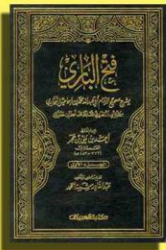
"الله تعالى منزّه عن الاستقرار والتحيّز والجهة فالعنودية ليست من حضرة المكان بل من حضرة الشرف ، أي وضع هذا الكتاب في محل معظم عنده " اهـ.

In his book '*Tarḥūt-Tathrib fī Sharḥit-Taḡrib*' when explaining the saying of the Prophet: << فهو عنده فوق العرش >> in reference to the Book positioned above the Throne which has the following words: '*Inna Raḥmatī sabagat Ghaḍabī*', which means that the matters *Allāh* approves of, far exceed in number those He does not, the *Hafidh* and *Muḥaddith Waliyyud-Dīn Abū Zurʿah Aḥmad ibn ʿAbdir-Raḥīm al-ʿIraqiyy* (died 826 AH) said: "***Allāh is clear from the acts of sitting, occupying space and directionality. Therefore, the word 'ʿinda' in the aforementioned context does not infer place, rather, it infers honourable status. Consequently, the true meaning of the Prophet's saying is that this book is positioned in a place Allāh awarded high status and honour***".

HAFIDH AL-[^]ASQALANIYY



الحافظ العسقلاني



قال الحافظ ابن حجر العسقلاني الشافعي (المتوفى سنة ٨٥٢هـ) في كتابه (فتح الباري) ما نصه:

"ولا يلزم من كون جهتي العلو والسفل محالاً على الله أن لا يوصف بالعلو لأن وصفه بالعلو من جهة المعنى، والمستحيل كون ذلك من جهة الحس، ولذلك ورد في صفته العالي والعلي والمتعالي " اهـ.

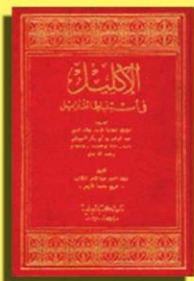
In his book '*Fathul-Bārī*' the great *Hafidh Ibn Hajr al-ʿAsgalaniyy*, the well-known *Shafiʿiyy* scholar (died 852 AH) said: "***Although it is impossible for the upward and downward directions to apply to Allāh, it does not entail He cannot be attributed with 'Al-ʿUluww'*** (Aboveness in a metaphorical sense). This is so because attributing Him with '*Al-ʿUluww*' (Aboveness) is from the point of status, which is impossibly applicable in a physical sense when in reference to *Allāh*. Hence, it has been related that among the names of *Allāh* are *Al-ʿAlī*, *Al-ʿAlīyy*, and *Al-Mutaʿalī*".

من العقائد السنية عند العلماء في القرن العاشر الهجري THE SUNNIYY CREED AMONG SCHOLARS OF THE 10TH CENTURY

HAFIDH AS-SUYUTIYY



الحافظ السيوطي



قال الحافظ جلال الدين عبد الرحمن بن أبي بكر السيوطي الشافعي (المتوفى سنة ٩١١ هـ) في كتابه (الإكليل في استنباط التنزيل) ما نصه :
”قوله تعالى (ليس كمثله شيء) فيه الرد على المشبهة وأنه تعالى ليس بجوهر ولا جسم ولا عرض ولا لون ولا طعم ولا حال في مكان ولا زمان“ اهـ.

In his book ‘*Al-‘Iklil fis-tinbatit-Tanzil*’ Al-Hafidh Jalalud-Din ^Abdur-Rahman ibn Abi Bakr As-Suyutiyy Ashafiyy (died 911 AH) said: “**The Ayah: [ليس كمثله شيء] holds within it a refutation to the creed of the Mushabbihah (those who liken Allah to the creation) and a confirmation that He (Allah) is not a mass, a body, a colour, a taste, and that He does not occupy a space or conform to time**”.

MUHADDITH AL-QASTALANIYY



المحدث القسطلاني



قال الشيخ أبو العباس شهاب الدين أحمد بن محمد القسطلاني المصري (المتوفى سنة ٩٢٣ هـ) في كتابه (إرشاد الساري شرح صحيح البخاري) ما نصه :
”ذات الله منزّه عن المكان والجهة “ اهـ.

In his book ‘*Irshad as-Sari Sharh Sahih al-Bukhariyy*’ Shaykh Abul-^Abbas Shihabud-Din Ahmad ibn Muḥammad al-Qastalāniyy al-Misriyy (died 923 AH) said: “**The Self of Allah is clear from the notions of place and direction**”.

من العقائد السنية عند العلماء في القرن الحادي عشر الهجري THE SUNNIYY CREED AMONG SCHOLARS OF THE 11TH CENTURY

SHAYKH AL-QARĪ



الشيخ القاري



قال الشيخ مُلا علي القاري الحنفي (المتوفى سنة ١٠١٤ هـ) في كتابه (الروض الأزهر في شرح الفقه الأكبر) ما نصه :

” أما علوه تعالى على خلقه المستفاد من نحو قوله تعالى: [وهو القاهر فوق عباده] (سورة الأنعام - آية ٦١) فعلو مكانة ومرتبة لا علو مكان كما هو مقرر عند أهل السنة والجماعة ” اهـ.

In his book ‘Ar-Rawḍul-Azhar fī Sharhil-Fiqhil-Akbar’ Shaykh Mullā ʿAlīyy al-Qarī (died 1014 AH), the well-known Hanafiyy scholar said: **“The ‘ʿUluww’ of Allāh over His creation embedded in the meaning of verse 61 of Surāt al-Anʿam is indeed an aboveness in status and domination, as mandated by Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaʿah and not a physical aboveness”.**

MUHADDITH AS-SIDDIQIYY



المحدث الصديقي



قال المحدث الشيخ محمد بن علي المعروف بابن علان الصديقي الشافعي (المتوفى سنة ١٠٥٧ هـ) في كتابه (الفتوحات الربانية) ما نصه :

” إن الله فوق كل موجود مكانةً واستيلاءً لا مكاناً وجهةً ” اهـ.

In his book ‘Al-Futuḥat ar-Rabbāniyyah’ Al-Muḥaddith ash-Shaykh Muḥammad Ibn ʿAlīyy known as Ibn ʿAllān as-Siddiqiyy ash-Shafiʿiyy (died 1057 AH) said: **“Indeed Allāh is above His creation in status and domination, and not in place and direction”.**

من العقائد السنية عند العلماء في القرن الثاني عشر الهجري THE SUNNIYY CREED AMONG SCHOLARS OF THE 12TH CENTURY

SHAYKH AZ-ZARQANIYY



الشيخ الزرقاني



قال الشيخ محمد بن عبد الباقي الزرقاني المالكي (المتوفى سنة ١١٢٢ هـ) في شرحه على موطأ الإمام مالك ما نصه :

”وقال البيضاوي : ” لما ثبت بالقواطع أنه سبحانه منزّه عن الجسميّة والتحيّز امتنع عليه النزول على معنى الانتقال من موضع إلى موضع أخفض منه ” اهـ.

In his elucidation to the book ‘*Muwatta*’ of *Imam Malik*’ Shaykh Muhammad ibn ^Abdil-Baqi az-Zarqaniyy (died 1122 AH), a well-known *Malikiyy* scholar said: “*Imam al-Baydawiyy* said: “Since it is confirmed through irrefutable proofs that *Allah* is clear from notions of body and dwelling, it follows that it is impossible that *Allah* would be moving from one place to another lower place”.”

SHAYKH AN-NABULUSIYY



الشيخ النابلسي



قال الصوفي الزاهد العارف الشيخ عبد الغني النابلسي الدمشقي الحنفي (المتوفى سنة ١١٤٣ هـ) في منظومته المعروفة (كفاية الغلام) ما نصه :

” وليس يحويه مكان لا ولا
تدركه العقول جلّ وعلا ” اهـ.

In his well-known poem called ‘*Kifayatul-Ghulam*’ Shaykh ^Abdul-Ghaniyy an-Nabulsiyy (died 1143 AH), a great *Sufi Hanafiyy* scholar from Damascus, Syria said: “Contained not He (*Allah*) is by place, certainly not, nor His reality can be grasped by the minds, He is in status above all the creations and is clear of all their characteristics”.

من العقائد السّنية عند العلماء في القرن الثالث عشر الهجري THE SUNNIYY CREED AMONG SCHOLARS OF THE 13TH CENTURY

AL-[^]ALLAMAH AD-DARDIR



العلامة الدردير



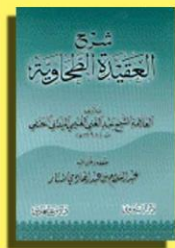
قال الشيخ العلامة أبو البركات أحمد بن محمد الدردير المالكي المصري (المتوفى سنة ١٢٠١ هـ) في منظومته المعروفة (الخريدة البهية) في حق الله تعالى ما نصه :
"منزه عن الحلول والجهه والاتصال الانفصال والسفه " اهـ.

In his well-known poem called 'al-Kharidah al-Bahiyyah' relating to the attributes of Allah, the great Malikiyy Scholar, Shaykh Abul-Barakat Ahmad ibn Muhammad ad-Dardir (died 1201 AH) from Egypt said: "**Allah is clear from occupancy, directionality, attachment, detachment and recklessness**".

SHAYKH AL-GHUNAYMIYY



الشيخ الغنيمي



قال الشيخ عبد الغني الغنيمي الميداني الحنفي الدمشقي (المتوفى سنة ١٢٩٨ هـ) في كتابه (شرح العقيدة الطحاوية) ما نصه : "والله تعالى ليس بجسم فليست رؤيته كروية الأجسام فإن الرؤية تابعة للشئ على ما هو عليه ، فمن كان في مكان وجهة لا يرى إلا في مكان وجهة كما هو كذلك ، ويرى أي المخلوق بمقابله واتصال شعاع وثبوت مسافة ، ومن لم يكن في مكان ولا جهة وليس بجسم فرؤيته كذلك ليس في مكان ولا جهة " اهـ.

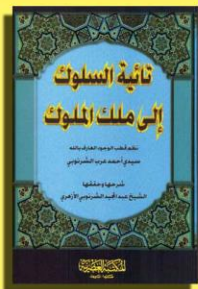
in his book 'Sharhul-[^]Aqidah at-Tahawiyyah' (The explanation of at-Tahawiyyah) Shaykh [^]Abdul-Ghaniyy al-Ghunaymiyy al-Maydaniyy (died 1298 AH), a great Hanafiyy scholar from Damascus, Syria said: "**Allah, the Exalted, is not a body, therefore to see Allah is different than to see the created bodies. Any seeing must be in accordance with the attributes of what is seen. Therefore, the creation which is in a certain place and direction cannot be seen except in that place and direction as part of its attributes. Furthermore, seeing a creation involves reciprocal proximity, connective optical beams and a set distance. However, seeing Allah, the One Who does not exist in a place or a direction and is not a bodily entity is just as well, without Him existing in a place or in a set direction**".

من العقائد السنية عند العلماء في القرن الرابع عشر الهجري THE SUNNIYY CREED AMONG SCHOLARS OF THE 14TH CENTURY

SHAYKH ASH-SHARNUBIYY



الشيخ الشرنوبي



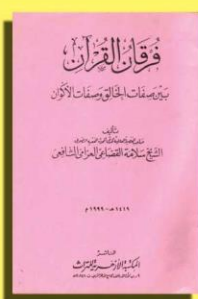
قال الشيخ عبد المجيد الشرنوبي الأزهري (المتوفى سنة ١٣٤٨ هـ) في شرحه على (تائية السلوك) ما نصه:
"فهو سبحانه لا يحدّه زمان ولا يحمله مكان بل كان ولا مكان ولا زمان وهو الآن على ما عليه كان" اهـ.

In his book 'Ta'yyatus-Suluk' Shaykh ^Abdul-Majid ash-Sharnubiyy al-Azhariyy (died 1348 AH) said: "**Allah, the Exalted is not subject to time limitations nor is carried over a certain place. In reality, He is eternally existent and eternally no place or time did exist, and now He exists as He eternally was (i.e. without being subject to place and time)**".

SHAYKH AL-^AZZAMIYY



الشيخ العزامي



قال الشيخ سلامة القضاعي العزامي الشافعي (المتوفى سنة ١٣٧٦ هـ) في كتابه (فرقان القرآن) ما نصه:
"أجمع أهل الحق من علماء السلف والخلف على تنزيه الحق سبحانه عن الجهة وتقدّسه عن المكان" اهـ.

In his book 'Furqan al-Qur'an' Shaykh Salamah al-Quda'iyy al-^Azzamiyy (died 1376 AH), a great *Shāfi'iyy* scholar said: "**The truthful righteous Salaf (Scholars who lived in the first three centuries after the Prophetic Migration) and Khalaf (Scholars who lived after Salaf) unanimously agree to clear al-Hagg (a name of Allah which means: The One Whose Existence is beyond doubt) the Exalted, from existing in any direction or place**".

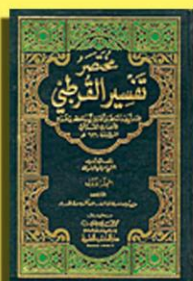
من العقائد السّنية عند أهل التفسير وعلوم القرآن

The Sunniyy Creed among the Scholars of Qur'anic Explanation AND ITS RELATED SCIENCES

IMAM AL-QURTUBIYY



المفسر القرطبي



قال المفسر محمد بن أحمد الأنصاري القرطبي المالكي (المتوفى سنة ٦٧١ هـ) في كتابه (الجامع لأحكام القرآن) ما نصه :
"والعليُّ يراد به علوُّ القدر والمنزلة لا علوُّ المكان لأن الله منزّه عن التحيز" اهـ.

In his book '*Al-Jami' li'ahkam al-Qur'an*' Shaykh Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-ʿAnsariyy al-Qurtubiyy (died 671 AH), a well-known Malikiyy scholar and explainer of the Holy *Qur'an* said: **"The name of *Allāh* '*Al-ʿAliyy*' refers to His greatness in status, and does not refer to an elevated place because *Allāh* is clear of occupying space"** .

من العقائد السّنية عند أهل التفسير وعلوم القرآن

The Sunniyy Creed among the Scholars of Qur'anic Explanation
AND ITS RELATED SCIENCES

IMAM AL-QURTUBIYY



المفسر القرطبي



قال المفسر محمد بن أحمد الأنصاري القرطبي المالكي (المتوفى سنة ٦٧١ هـ) في كتابه (الجامع لأحكام القرآن) ما نصه :
”والعليُّ يراد به علوُّ القدر والمنزلة لا علوُّ المكان لأن الله منزّه عن التحيز” اهـ.

In his book 'Al-Jami' li'ahkam al-Qur'an' Shaykh Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-'Ansariyy al-Qurtubiyy (died 671 AH), a well-known Malikiyy scholar and explainer of the Holy Qur'an said: **“The name of Allah 'Al-'Aliyy' refers to His greatness in status, and does not refer to an elevated place because Allah is clear of occupying space”**.

IMAM AN-NASAFIYY



المفسر النسفي



قال المفسر عبد الله بن أحمد النسفي (المتوفى سنة ٧٠١ هـ) في تفسيره ما نصه :
”إنه تعالى كان ولا مكان فهو على ما كان قبل خلق المكان لم يتغير عما كان” اهـ.

In his explanation, Shaykh ^Abdullah ibn Ahmad an-Nasafiyy (died 701 AH), also a renowned interpreter of the Holy Qur'an said: **“He (Allah) is eternally existent and eternally place did not exist, and He still exists as He was before creating place, He did not change”**.

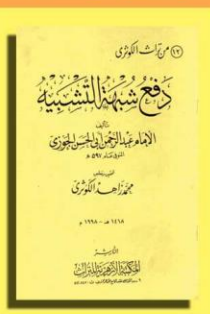
من العقائد السّنية عند أهل الحديث وعلومه

The Sunniyy Creed among the Scholars of *Hadīth*
AND ITS RELATED SCIENCES

HAFIDH IBN AL-JAWZIYY



الحافظ ابن الجوزي



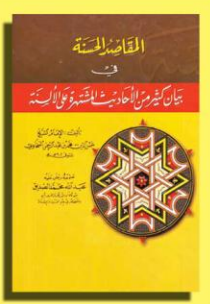
قال الحافظ عبد الرحمن بن علي المعروف بابن الجوزي الحنبلي (المتوفى سنة ٥٩٧ هـ) في كتابه (دفع شبهة التشبيه) ما نصه :
"الواجب علينا أن نعتقد أن ذات الله تعالى لا يحويه مكان ولا يوصف بالتغيير والانتقال" اهـ.

In his book 'Daf' Shubhatit-Tashbih' *Hafidh* ^*Abdur-Rahman ibn ^Aliyy* known as *Ibn al-Jawziyy* (died 597 AH), a great *Hambaliyy* scholar said: "It is obligatory upon us to firmly believe that the Self of *Allah* is not confined to place nor attributed with change or moving".

HAFIDH AS-SAKHAWIYY



الحافظ السخاوي



قال الحافظ محمد بن عبد الرحمن السخاوي (المتوفى سنة ٩٠٢ هـ) في كتابه (المقاصد الحسنة) ما نصه :
"قال شيخنا - يعني الحافظ ابن حجر العسقلاني - إنَّ علم الله يشمل جميع الأقطار ، والله سبحانه وتعالى منزّه عن الحلول في الأماكن ، فإنّه سبحانه وتعالى كان قبل أن تَحْدُثَ الأماكن " اهـ.

In his book 'Al-Maqasidul-Hasanah' *Hafidh* *Muhammad ibn ^Abdir-Rahman as-Sakhawiy* (died 902 AH) said: "Our *Shaykh* (meaning *Ibn Hajar al-^Asgalaniyy*) said: "The Knowledge of *Allah* encompasses all things, and *Allah* The Exalted is clear of occupying places, for He is eternally existent before places were brought into existence".

من العقائد السنية عند أهل الفقه وأصوله من الحنفية

The Sunniyy Creed among the Scholars of Islamic Jurisprudence
ACCORDING TO THE HANAFIYY SCHOOL

HAFIDH AZ-ZABIDIYY



الحافظ الزبيدي



قال الحافظ اللغوي الفقيه محمد مرتضى الزبيدي الحنفي (المتوفى سنة ١٢٠٥ هـ) في كتابه (إتحاف السادة المتقين) ما نصه :

”الله تعالى مُنَزَّهٌ عن التغير من حال إلى حال والانتقال من مكان إلى مكان ، وكذا الاتصال والانفصال فإن كلا من ذلك من صفات المخلوقين “ اهـ.

In his book ‘*Ithafus-Sadatil-Muttaqin*’ the great Hafidh, Faqih and well-known linguist, Muhammad Murtaḍa az-Zabidiyy (died 1205 AH) of the Hanafiyy School said: “**Allah, the Exalted, is clear of changing from one state to another, moving from place to place and physical attachment and detachment, for they all are attributes of the creations**”.

AL-[^]ALLAMAH IBN [^]ABIDIN



العلامة ابن عابدين



قال الشيخ الفقيه محمد أمين بن عمر المعروف بابن عابدين الحنفي (المتوفى سنة ١٢٥٢ هـ) الدمشقي _ صاحب الحاشية المعروفة - في مدح النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم ما نصه :

”ودنا من الرحمن عز وجل قرب مكانة من غير قرب مكان “ اهـ.

In praising the Prophet peace be upon him *Shaykh* and *Faqih* Muhammad ^Amīn ibn ^Umar known as *Ibn ^Abidin* (died 1252 AH), the famous Hanafiyy scholar from Damascus - the author of the well-known commentary – said: “**And Muhammad (peace be upon him) was awarded ‘al-qurb’ (greater status) by ar-Rahman (Allah), not ‘al-qurb’ that refers to closeness in distance or place**” .

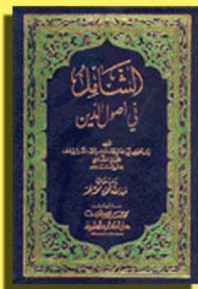
من العقائد السنية عند أهل الفقه وأصوله من الشافعية

The Sunniyy Creed among the Scholars of Islamic Jurisprudence
ACCORDING TO THE SHAFI'IIYY SCHOOL

IMAM AL-JUWAYNIYY



الإمام الجويني



قال إمام الحرمين أبو المعالي عبد الملك الجويني الشافعي (المتوفى سنة ٤٧٨ هـ) في كتابه (الشامل في أصول الدين) ما نصه :
”واعلموا أن مذهب أهل الحق : أن الرب سبحانه يتقدس عن شغل حيّز ويتنزه عن الاختصاص بجهة ” اهـ.

In his book 'Ash-Shamil fi 'Usulid-Din' Shaykh Abul-Ma'ali ^Abdul-Malik al-Juwayniyy (died 478 AH), a great Shafi'iyy scholar known as *Imam al-Haramayn* said: **“Know that the creed of the righteous people is that the Almighty Lord is clear of engaging a space as He is clear of pertaining to any direction”**.

HAFIDH AN-NAWAWIYY



الحافظ النووي



قال الحافظ أبو زكريا محي الدين يحيى بن شرف النووي الشافعي (المتوفى سنة ٦٧٦ هـ) في (شرحه على صحيح مسلم) ما نصه :
”إن الله تعالى ليس كمثله شيء وإنه منزّه عن التجسيم والانتقال والتحيز في جهة وعن سائر صفات المخلوق ” اهـ.

In his explanation of 'Sahih Muslim' *Hafidh Abu Zakariyya Muhyid-Din Yahya ibn Sharaf an-Nawawiyy ash-Shafi'iyy* (died 676 AH) said: **“Verily Allah, the Exalted, does not resemble any of the creations and is clear of bodily concepts, moving, occupying any direction and of all the creation's characteristics”**.

من العقائد السنية عند أهل الفقه وأصوله من المالكية

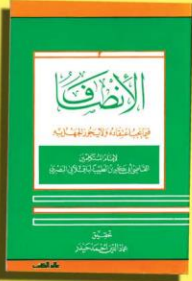
The Sunniyy Creed among the Scholars of Islamic Jurisprudence

ACCORDING TO THE MALIKIYY SCHOOL

AL-QADI AL-BAQILLANIYY



القاضي الباقلاني



قال القاضي أبو بكر الباقلاني المالكي (المتوفى سنة ٤٠٣ هـ) في كتابه (الإنصاف فيما يجب اعتقاده ولا يجوز الجهل به) ما نصه :

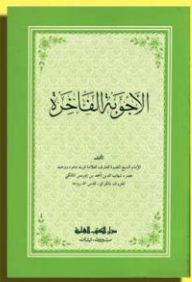
” ولا نقول إن العرش له- أي لله - قرار ولا مكان ، لأن الله تعالى كان ولا مكان فلما خلق المكان لم يتغير عما كان ” اهـ.

In his book ‘*Al-Insaf fima yajibu^tiqaduhu wa la yajuzul-jahlu bihi*’ (the just ruling regarding what one is obligated to believe in and cannot be ignorant of) Al-Qadi (Judge) Abu Bakr al-Malikiyy, a renowned Malikiyy scholar (died 403 AH) said: **“We do not state that the Grand ^Arsh (Throne) is a residence or a location for Allah, due to the fact that Allah, the Exalted, is eternally existent and place is not, hence when place was brought into existence by His Creating He did not change”**.

AL-^ALLAMAH AL-QARAFIYY



العلامة القرافي



قال العلامة الأصولي الشيخ أحمد بن إدريس القرافي الفقيه المالكي المصري (المتوفى سنة ٦٨٤ هـ) في كتابه (الأجوبة الفاخرة) ما نصه :

” وهو - أي الله - ليس في جهة ، ونراه - ونحن في الجنة - وهو ليس في جهة ” اهـ.

In his book ‘*Al-Ajwibal-Fakhirah*’ Shaykh Ahmad ibn Idris al-Qarafiyy (died 684 AH), an Egyptian Malikiyy scholar said: **“And He (Allah) is not in any direction, and when we are admitted to Paradise Allah will grant us the honour of seeing Him without Him being in any direction”**.

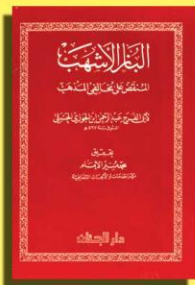
من العقائد السنية عند أهل الفقه وأصوله من الحنابلة

The Sunniyy Creed among the Scholars of Islamic Jurisprudence
ACCORDING TO THE HAMBALIYY SCHOOL

SHAYKH IBN ^AQIL



الشيخ ابن عقيل



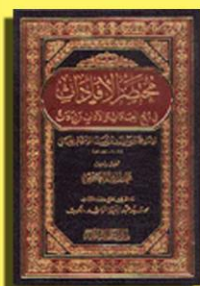
قال أبو الوفاء علي بن عقيل البغدادي شيخ الحنابلة في زمانه (المتوفى سنة ٥١٣ هـ) كما نُقل عنه في كتاب (الباز الأشهب) ما نصه :
” تعالى الله أن يكون له صفة تشغل الأمكنة ، هذا عين التجسيم ” اهـ.

Shaykh Abul-Wafa' ^Aliyy ibn ^Aqil al-Baghdadiyy (died 513 AH), the head of the Hambaliyy School at the time, was quoted in a book called 'Al-Bazul-Ashhab': “**Allah is clear of having the attribute of occupying places, for this is exactly the blasphemous belief of *tajsim* (attributing Allah with bodily concepts)**”.

SHAYKH IBN BALBAN



الشيخ ابن بلبان



قال الشيخ محمد بن بدر الدين بن بلبان الدمشقي الحنبلي (المتوفى سنة ١٠٨٣ هـ) في كتابه (مختصر الإفادات) ما نصه:

” من اعتقد أو قال إن الله بذاته في كل مكان أو في مكان فهو كافر، فالله كان ولا مكان ثم خلق المكان وهو كما كان قبل خلق المكان ” اهـ.

In his book 'Mukhtasar al-Ifadat' Shaykh Muḥammad ibn Badrid-Dīn ibn Balban (died 1083 AH), a Damaskan Hambaliyy scholar said: “**Whosoever believes or says that Allah exists in all places or in one particular place is certainly a non-believer (*kāfir*). It is obligatory to believe that Allah, the Exalted, does not resemble His creation, for Allah's Existence is eternal and the existence of place is not. Allah created the place, and He still exists as He eternally did before place was created**”.

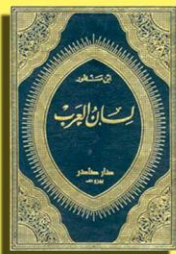
من العقائد السنية عند أهل اللغة

THE SUNNIYY CREED AMONG THE SCHOLARS OF THE ARABIC LANGUAGE

AL-[^]ALLAMAH IBN MANDHUR



العلامة ابن منظور



قال العلامة اللغوي محمد بن مكرم الإفريقي المصري المعروف بابن منظور (المتوفى سنة ٧١١ هـ) في كتابه (لسان العرب) ما نصه :

”المراد بقرب العبد من ربه عز وجلّ القرب بالذكر والعمل الصالح لا قرب الذات والمكان لأن ذلك من صفات الأجسام، والله يتعالى عن ذلك ويتقدس ” اهـ.

in his book ‘*Lisan al-[^]Arab*’ the African Egyptian scholar and linguist, *Muhammad ibn Mukarram* known as *Ibn Mandhur* (died 711 AH) said: “**The meaning of ‘the *Qurb* of the slave to *Allah*’ refers to the acquisition of a higher rank due to the slave’s engagement in performing good deeds and frequently mentioning designated statements of praise to *Allah*. Undoubtedly, ‘the *Qurb* of the slave to *Allah*’ does not refer to physical closeness to *Allah* neither in distance nor in location, since physical closeness is among the characteristics of objects and *Allah* is verily clear of that”.**

LINGUIST FAYRUZ [^]ABADI



اللغوي الفيروز آبادي



قال اللغوي مجد الدين محمد بن يعقوب الفيروزآبادي (المتوفى سنة ٨١٧ هـ) في كتابه (بصائر ذوي التمييز) ما نصه :

”قرب الله تعالى من العبد هو بالإفضال عليه والفيض لا بالمكان ” اهـ.

In his book ‘*Basa’ir dhawit-Tamyiz*’ The linguistic scholar *Majdud-Din Muhammad ibn Ya[^]qub al-Fayruz Abadi* (died 817 AH) said: “**The *Qurb* of *Allah* to His slave’ refers to the endowments of *Allah* bestowed upon the pious slave and does not refer to closeness in distance”.**

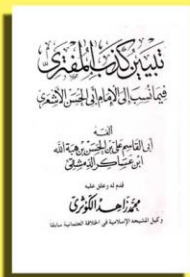
من العقائد السنية عند أهل التواريخ والسير والتراجم

The Sunniyy Creed among the Scholars of
ISLAMIC HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHIES OF MUSLIM SCHOLARS

HAFIDH IBN ^ASAKIR



الحافظ ابن عساكر



قال الحافظ أبو القاسم علي بن الحسين بن هبة الله الشهير بابن عساكر
الدمشقي (المتوفى سنة ٥٧١ هـ) في كتابه (تبيين كذب المفتري) في حق
الله تعالى ما نصه :

**"كان ولا مكان فخلق العرش والكرسي ولم يحتج إلى مكان ، وهو بعد
خلق المكان كما كان قبل خلقه" اهـ.**

In his book 'Tabyinu kadhbil-Muftari', Hafidh Abul-Qasim ^Aliyy ibn al-Husayn ibn Hibatillah known as Ibn ^Asakir ad-Dimashqiyy (died 571 AH) on the subject of the Attributes of Allah, the Exalted, said: **"He (Allah) is eternally existent and eternally place did not exist, He created the ^Arsh and Kursiyy without the need for place. He still exists, after place was brought into existence, as He was before creating the place (i.e. without a place)".**

IMAM AT-TABARIYY



الإمام الطبري



قال الإمام الحافظ المجتهد أبو جعفر محمد ابن جرير
الطبري (المتوفى سنة ٣١٠ هـ) في كتابه (تاريخ الأمم والملوك) في حق
الله تعالى ما نصه :

**"لا تحيط به الأوهام ولا تحويه الأقطار ولا تدركه الأبصار
وهو يدرك الأبصار وهو اللطيف الخبير" اهـ.**

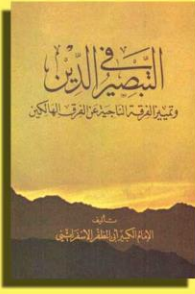
In his book 'Tarikhul-'Umam wal-Muluk' (The History of Nations and their Kings), Imam, Hafidh and Mujtahid Abu Ja^far Muhammad ibn Jarir at-Tabariyy (died 310 AH) said on the subject of the Attributes of Allah: **"Delusions cannot grasp the Reality of Allah, places do not contain Him, sights do not attain Him, rather He knows about them all. Verily He is The One Whose Reality cannot be grasped by delusions and Whose Knowledge encompasses all".**

من العقائد السنية عند من ألف في أحوال الفرق The Sunniy Creed among the Scholars who authored books ON THE SUBJECT OF VARIOUS SECTS

FAQIH AL-ASFARAYINIYY



الفقيه الأسفراييني



قال الفقيه المتكلم أبو المظفر الأسفراييني (المتوفى سنة ٤٧١ هـ)
في كتابه (التبصير في الدين) ما نصه:

” الباب الخامس عشر في بيان اعتقاد أهل السنة والجماعة : وأن
تعلم أن كل ما دل على حدوث شيء من الحد والنهاية والمكان والجهة
والسكون والحركة فهو مستحيل عليه سبحانه وتعالى ” اهـ.

In chapter 15 of his book ‘*At-Tabṣir fid-Dīn*’ (The Guide to the Religion) for the purpose of elucidating the creed of *Ahlussunnah wal-Jama’ah*, the *Faqih* and well-known scholar of *Tawhīd* Abul-Mudhaffar al-Asfarayiniyy (died 471 AH) said: **“The slave must know that anything which dictates creationism such as limits, extremes, place, direction, stillness and movement is impossible to apply to *Allāh*, the One clear of all the creations’ attributes.”**

SHAYKH ASH-SHAHRASTANIYY



الشيخ الشهرستاني



قال الشيخ محمد بن عبد الكريم الشهرستاني الشافعي (المتوفى سنة ٥٤٨ هـ) في
كتاب (نهاية الإقدام) ما نصه :

” فمذهب أهل الحق أن الله سبحانه لا يشبه شيئاً من المخلوقات ولا يشبهه شيء منها
بوجه من وجوه المشابهة والمماثلة [ليس كمثله شيء وهو السميع البصير] فليس
البارئ سبحانه بجوهر ولا جسم ولا عرض ولا في مكان ولا في زمان ” اهـ.

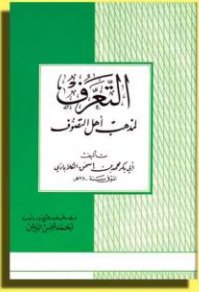
In his book ‘*Nihayatul-Iqdam*’, Shaykh Muḥammad ibn ‘Abdil-Karīm ash-Shahrastaniyy, a great *Shafi’iyy* scholar (died 548 AH) said: **“The creed of the People of Truth is that *Allāh*, the Exalted, does not resemble any of the creations, and none of them resembles Him in any sort of similarity or equivalence. Verse 11 of *Surat ash-Shura* means: [There is absolutely nothing that resembles *Allāh*, and He is attributed with Hearing and Sight]. Hence *Allāh* is not a constituent part of an object, a mass, a bodily characteristic, nor is He located in any place or subject to time”.**

من العقائد السنية عند الزهاد والصوفية الصادقين THE SUNNIYY CREED AMONG THE TRUE SUFI SCHOLARS

SHAYKH AL-KALABADHIYY



الشيخ الكلاباذي



قال الشيخ أبو بكر محمد بن إسحاق الكلاباذي الحنفي (المتوفى سنة ٣٨٠ هـ) في كتابه (التعرف لمذهب أهل التصوف) ما نصه :

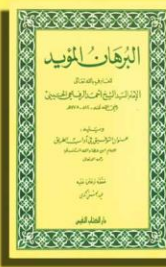
"اجتمعت الصوفية على أن الله لا يحويه مكان ولا يجري عليه زمان" اهـ.

In his book 'At-Ta'rif li-Madhhab Ahlit-Ta'sawwuf' (The Guidance to the methodology of the true sufis), Shaykh Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Ishaq al-Kalabadhiyy, a Hanafiyy scholar (died 380 AH), said: **"The sufi scholars unanimously agree that Allah is not contained by place nor is He subject to time".**

IMAM AR-RIFA'IIYY



الإمام الرفاعي



قال الشيخ إمام الصوفية العارف بالله السيد أحمد الرفاعي الشافعي (المتوفى سنة ٥٧٨ هـ) في كتابه (البرهان المؤيد) ما نصه :

"طهّروا عقائدكم من تفسير الاستواء في حقه تعالى بالاستقرار كاستواء الأجسام على الأجسام المستلزم للحلول، تعالى الله عن ذلك، وإياكم والقول بالفوقية والسفلية والمكان واليد والعين بالجراحة والنزول بالإتيان والانتقال" اهـ.

In his book 'Al-Burhan al-Mu'ayyad' (The Substantiated Proof), the prominent Shaykh and Imam of true sufis, Shaykh Ahmad Ar-Rifa'iyy ash-Shafi'iyy (died 578 AH) said: **"Clear your beliefs from interpreting the Arabic term 'Istiwa', when in reference to Allah, as physical establishment in a way similar to the 'istiwa' of bodies upon other bodies which dictates the act of occupation because Allah is clear of that. And do not sanction attributing to Allah a directional above or below, a location, a physical hand or an eye or interpreting the word 'Nuzul' as physically descending or moving."**